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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the way youths who had been to the Berrien County Juvenile Center evaluated the impact of the treatment program. Of the 104 youths who had been in the center between 1974 and 1976, 38 completed questionnaires. Repeaters were interviewed at the center while one-time offenders were visited at their homes. There was no median number of arrests following initial release from the center, and the median change in severity of crime from those rearrested was to "less severe." Significantly, in 93 percent of the cases, the new crime was no different from or was less severe than the original. The median grade level both before and after the residential treatment program (RTP) showed no change. The youths' achievement level remained below grade six even after the RTP. Both the group meetings and the positive peer culture programs were held in high esteem by the respondents. However, the residential school program was not significantly useful in helping the youths return permanently to public school. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents were unemployed after the RTP and 57 percent were not in school. (Author/IRT)

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BERRIEN COUNTY JUVENILE CENTER

IMPACT OF THE TREATMENT PROGRAM

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BERRIEN COUNTY JUVENILE CENTER:

IMPACT OF THE TREATMENT

PROGRAM

A

Research Study

Conducted by

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BERRIEN COUNTY JUVENILE CENTER:

IMPACT OF THE TREATMENT PROGRAM

Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the way youths who had been to the Berrien County Juvenile Center evaluated the impact of the treatment program. The basic problem was: Was the program helpful in assisting the youngsters to remain out of trouble once they had left the Center, or was the program totally unrelated to societal pressures? An examination of this problem was vital to the future development of the Center with a view to providing more effective service for troubled youth.

Method

This study essentially is descriptive in nature although some statistical analysis has been used. The population used was all youngsters at the Juvenile Center from 1974-1976, a total of one hundred and four. A list of the students constituting the population for this study was obtained from the Berrien County Juvenile Center. To gather the data, a seven-part questionnaire was designed and sent to those residing outside Berrien County. Repeaters of the program were interviewed personally at the Center, while one-time offenders were visited at their homes. Discriminant analysis was the major statistical method used to examine the da[illegible]

Findings

Based on the data analysis the demographic information revealed a significant distribution of frequencies in nearly all cases. The only exception was the difference in race.

There was no median number of arrests following initial release from the Center, and the median change in severity of crime from those rearrested was "less severe." Significantly, in 93% of the cases, the new crime was no different or less severe.

The median grade level both "before and after RTP" showed no change. Similarly, the achievement level (grade) remained below grade six even after the Residential Treatment Program (RTP).

Both the group meetings and the PPC program were held in high esteem by the respondents. However, the residential school program was not significantly useful in helping them to return permanently to public school. This is due to the fact that many public schools refused to accept these students because of their record, according to the juveniles. In fact, 57% of the released persons were not in school after the RTP, 82% of the released persons were divided between no supervision and after care, and 54% of the respondents were not involved in community activities of any sort following the release from the RTP.

Conclusions

It appears from the data collected that the program was helpful in assisting the youngsters to remain out of trouble once they had left the Center. Group meetings and the PPC program seemed to be very helpful in this regard. Because of the percentage of youngsters contacted, however, the conclusions of the study will have to be limited to the said group. The data also revealed that nearly two-thirds of the respondents were unemployed after the RTP and 57% were not in school. There could,

therefore, be more emphasis on these areas with particular reference to constant supervision so as to effect higher employment possibilities and regular school attendance. It appears that if positive action is taken, laudable changes can be made in these areas.

BERRIEN COUNTY JUVENILE CENTER:

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PROGRAM

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency is a relatively modern concept referring to the criminality of nonadult persons and to certain forms of behavior on their part which, within the context of different cultures, are regarded as socially deviant. The concept has gained general acceptance only in the twentieth century. This followed the creation in 1899 of what is now acknowledged as the world's first juvenile court in Cook County, Illinois. Previously all offenders, regardless of age, were dealt with according to the nature of the offenses committed by them, such treatment being usually punitive. Juvenile court philosophy drew attention to the individual as someone in need of care and protection in view of his immaturity. The offence committed by him was subordinated to this consideration.

In an effort to assist juvenile offenders several measures have been applied by the courts. One of the most frequently used is probation. In this setting, a juvenile delinquent is placed under the supervision of a probation officer whose duties are to befriend and assist him with a view to his rehabilitation. Other measures of treatment in freedom include foster home placement for those juveniles who have no homes or whose homes are inadequate. In spite of the emphasis on rehabilitation in the treatment of juvenile delinquents, many countries still employ measures of doubtful rehabilitative value such as corporal punishment.

Next to being placed on probation, juveniles are most often sent to institutions for rehabilitation. The modern juvenile institution is a

greatly improved version of the early reformatory school, but a far cry from the ideal establishment. This would send back to the community a rehabilitated juvenile whose adjustment to normal living conditions is easy and smooth. In view of the fact that the institutional setting offers an artificial atmosphere usually unrelated to actual conditions in the outside community, aftercare is a very important element in the treatment process. As in probation, the importance of having well-qualified personnel cannot be overemphasized.

Because of the alarming increase in juvenile court cases since 1950, treatment services have had to be considerably improved. However, the emphasis must remain on effective preventive measures. These are of two kinds--general prevention by the provision of social welfare measures such as adequate housing and education for the healthy growth and development of children, and specific prevention by the provision of detection and treatment services for juveniles who develop behavior problems which may result in delinquency if left untreated. It is commonly accepted that general prevention, however desirable, cannot automatically solve the problems of juvenile delinquency. Specific measures are essential, therefore, in any preventive program. Such measures consist of child and family guidance services and an educational system in which teachers are alert to the potential problems of their students.

The effectiveness of preventive programs cannot be judged until more knowledge is gained as to the causes of delinquent behavior. Research is opening up new possibilities in this regard. Programs such as Positive Peer Culture have made a remarkable contribution, but much is yet to be known on the treatment and prevention of delinquents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to examine the way participating youth evaluated the impact of the treatment center. The basic question was: Was the program helpful in assisting the youngsters to remain out of trouble once they had left the Center, or was the program totally unrelated to societal pressures? In view of providing more effective service for troubled youth an examination of this problem was vital to the future development of the Center.

To clarify the central problem, several questions were raised. They included:

1. Have the goals of the OCJP grant been met?
   a. Has the number of repeaters decreased?
   b. Has there been a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to the Department of Social Services and the State Training School?
2. What is the rearrest ratio for released youth?
   a. After 30 days
   b. After 60 days
   c. After 90 days
   d. After 180 days
   e. After one year
   f. After more than one year
3. Are there differences among those rated as "successful" and those rated as "failures" in characteristics such as age, race, residence, marital status of parents, offense committed?
4. Are there significant differences in the number and kinds of arrests following release among the six groups? (ques. 2).
5. What is the relationship between success and failure and the characteristics mentioned in question 3? Are any relationships significant?

6. By what criteria shall success or failure be measured?
7. Are there significant differences between expected and actual outcomes? How may these differences be explained?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study can be further developed under a four-tier sequence:

1. To provide the Juvenile Court and Juvenile Center administration with a method for evaluating the treatment program.
2. To collect and analyze information about juvenile delinquents for whom services have been provided through the treatment program.
3. To assess the impact of the treatment program.
4. To provide a reliable basis for planning for the treatment unit and program modifications.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

"Child," "youth," and "youngster," are used synonymously throughout this study and denote a person of juvenile court age. Juvenile court law defines a "child" as any person under the specified age, no matter how mature he may seem.

Adjudicatory hearing: a hearing to determine whether the allegations of a petition are supported by the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt or by a preponderance of the evidence.

Court: the court having jurisdiction over children who are alleged to be or found to be delinquent.

The place where justice is judicially administered. Black (1957).

Detention: temporary care of a child alleged to be delinquent who requires

secure custody in physically restricting facilities pending court disposition or execution of a court order.

Dispositional hearing: a hearing held subsequently to the adjudicating hearing in order to determine what order of disposition should be made concerning a child adjudicated as delinquent.

Residential child care facility: a dwelling other than detention or shelter care facility which is licensed to provide living accommodations, care, treatment and maintenance for children and youth. Such facilities include foster family homes, group homes and halfway houses.

Petition: an application for an order of court or for some other judicial action.

Absconding: to go in a clandestine manner out of the jurisdiction of the courts, or to lie concealed, in order to avoid their process. Black (1957).

Jurisdiction: it is the authority, capacity or power to act or the authority by which courts and judicial officers take cognizance of and decide cases. Black (1957).

Jail: a building designated by law or regularly used for the confinement of persons held in lawful custody.

Case: a general term for an action, cause, or controversy at law or in equity. A question contested before a court of justice. Black (1957).

Justice: the constant and perpetual disposition to render every man his due; conforming to the laws.

Institution: an establishment, especially one of public character or one affecting a community. Black (1957).

Statute: an act of the legislature declaring, commanding, or prohibiting something. Black (1957).

DELIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study was delimited to an evaluation of the products of the Center's program and services as measured against appropriate standards provided by a panel of judges named by the Center, relevant norms provided by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and comparative information of appropriate quality and relevance that may be derived from the files and/or reports of other agency programs in Berrien County.

An additional limiting factor was the population. Only youths who had been to the Center since the Positive Peer Culture was started in 1974 were used. The years covered were 1974-1976. Out of this group of one hundred and four, only thirty-eight either consented to be interviewed, were contacted by personal visits or returned the questionnaires. Moreover, since the investigation was strictly limited to a product evaluation, it in no way included process or contacts. Whatever inferences were made about the program were purely incidental.

It is therefore necessary to limit the conclusions of this study.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature pertaining to youngsters to highlight crimes committed as well as to focus on prevention and rehabilitation. Rehabilitation units include the home, the community, the courts and correctional centers. The literature will be treated under several sub-headings in order to make the presentation more understandable.

Many studies have been made concerning teenage problems and juvenile crimes. Voluminous monographs have detailed the adolescent life and the resultant problems youngsters face, but these seemed to have made minimal impact in deterring would-be criminals or in containing repeaters. In a cover story, Time Magazine (1977) reported that juvenile crimes have reached appalling proportions throughout the United States. Since 1960, juvenile crime has risen twice as fast as adults', and more than half of all serious crimes in the country are committed by youths aged ten to seventeen.

Adolescence, that exciting but perplexing period of life, is characterized by many problems of adjustment, Stanton (du Preez, 1977), a phenomenon that is encouraged by the increasing complexity of modern western society and the pressures of having to make early life-long decisions. Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Erickson, 1970; Milner, 1969; Spuck, Fruth and Magnuson, 1973 (du Preez, 1977). The bewilderment

that results is portrayed in a new mutant juvenile who poses a distressing picture for rural and urban America. In Chicago, one-third of all murders in 1976 were committed by the 20-or-younger age bracket, a 29% increase over 1975. In 1976 in Detroit, youths committed so many crimes that city officials were forced to impose a 10 p.m. curfew for anyone 16 or under. Time (1977).

Family Environment

Although offenders come from every ethnic group and environment, most are non-white kids whose resentments are hardened in the slums. Time (1977). According to Moos (1975), environmental influences have an important effect in later life. He believes that the social climate within which an individual functions may have a significant impact on his overall sense of well-being, and on his social, personal, and intellectual development.

He further notes that environmental and social setting influences are themselves important determinants of aggression. This implies that to correctly predict an individual's aggressive behavior, one should know something about the environment in which the individual is functioning.

Mitchell (Moos, 1975) has shown that delinquency rates are higher in crowded neighborhoods. High population density conditions affect the patterns of social relationships in the family, and adolescents respond to stressful social relationships that housing conditions have helped to create. To relieve the high density, adolescent children are usually given greater freedom to leave home; this in turn weakens the control the family has over its children. "This decrease in support and control may facilitate the development of the kind of delinquent problems that are characteristic of high-density slum conditions." (p. 269).

Many studies including McCord, McCord and Zola (Moos, 1975) have reinforced the prevalent belief that delinquents come from broken or inadequate homes. It has been discovered that boys who later became convicted delinquents more often came from broken homes or homes characterized as quarrelsome-neglecting than from quarrelsome-affectionate homes.

On the question of recidivism, Davies, Davies and Sinclair (Moos, 1975) indicated that the family environment had a vital impact on probationers. Lower rates were found for boys from homes where the father was warm and affectionate toward the son, but was a firm disciplinarian. Firm discipline from the mother was also beneficial, but only when the mother was supporting the father. The researchers emphasized that firm discipline from the mother was ineffective if the father was lax or erratic in his discipline.

Hypothesizing on the causes of youth crime, analysts quoted by Time (1977) mentioned unemployment, inadequate schools and the poverty of ghetto life. Schools, indeed, may be failing to equip students with the necessary elementary skills, but it has been observed that the majority of poor kids do not commit crimes. "The persistent offenders may come from a ghetto, but they often have more money than the people they rob." (p. 20). They do it just for fun and are largely influenced by television which almost deifies violence. More probing analysts point out that historically, crime has been produced by rapid economic expansion and ethnically mixed populations, hence the rise in violence in the United States during periods of the nineteenth century.

Undoubtedly the most important cause is the breakdown of the family. Time (1977). Parents have neglected their responsibility. More and more unsupervised youngsters appear to be developing a taste

for sadism earlier in life. That no age limit can be set on crime was demonstrated in Washington, D.C. when a six-year-old boy siphoned gasoline from a car and poured it over a sleeping neighbor. To add to the drama, he struck a match and watched the man go up in flames.

The Time writers went on to say that parents must realize that they just cannot turn to the police and say, "Here's my problem, see if you can change this child for me." As White (1905) indicated, if the children do not find in their parents and in the home the sympathy and companionship they long for, they will turn to other sources which may imperil both mind and character.

Brought to Justice

It is generally believed that if society is to be protected from the violent young, respect for punishment must be restored. Youngsters should know just what to expect should they commit a particular crime. Time (1977).

However, in spite of the evidence which shows that a tougher policy toward violent youth reduces crime, Time (1977) and Sarri (1974) maintain that the practice is almost always destructive for the child and even dangerous for the society that permits its youth to be jailed. Even so, one can hardly dispute the decline in homicides from 29 in 1973 to 5 in 1975 after stronger juvenile laws were enacted and violent repeaters were finally jailed in New Orleans. This action seems to convey a message to the peers of a career criminal. Because of this stringent action they do not want to follow him. Time (1977).

This tougher policy toward youth crime has occasionally led to public lamentations about the negative aspects of jailing youth.

Sarri (1974) reports that incidents of rape and suicide have not deterred authorities from placing juveniles in jails under conditions that are more punitive and harmful than for adults. Sixty years ago Edith Abbott (Sarri, 1974) advocated the abolition of county jails; and similar recommendations were made as recently as 1967 and 1973 by presidential commissions appointed to help forumlate policies on criminal justice. "The public tends to ignore the fact that every youngster placed behind bars will return to the society which placed him there." NCCD, 1961, p. 3, (Sarri, 1974).

In light of the foregoing, Sarri believes that the placing of juveniles in lock-ups or jails should be totally eliminated. Placing any of them in specialized detention facilities should be limited only to those who have been formally charged with law violations. She asserts that the majority of youth now held in detention should be placed in shelter or foster-care facilities, or released on recognizance of parents or other responsible adults.

Moos (1975) agrees that dissatisfactions with institutional correctional programs have reached a peak in recent years. The arguments against the present system of institutionalization have been stated over and over, eg. Empey (Moos, 1975). Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck (Moos, 1975) point out that reformatories do not reform, nor does any of the current methods of dealing with criminals lead to observable reduction in their antisocial conduct.

Yet there is no unanimity on suggestions offered to sidestep institutionalization. In fact, Sarri's (1974) suggestion that youth be placed in foster-care facilities has come under fire from Palmer and Rabinow (Moos, 1975). And as to the idea that youngsters be released into their parents custody analysts hold that overworked probation officers

cannot give them much attention. Time (1977). As a result, the juvenile system has become a huge sieve where young people come and go with neither punishment nor rehabilitation. No wonder Time Magazine described the system as "notoriously inefficient" and a failure. Complainants and witnesses who are nervous to begin with and sometimes even threatened by the offenders, become tired of waiting for delayed court trials and walk out. Result, case closed. At other times even if a trial is held, the defendant has a lot in his favor. For example, a juvenile may not be able to read or write but he can recite his Miranda rights "without pausing for breath." Time (1977).

Time Magazine goes on to say that even when juvenile authorities decide a youngster is just too dangerous to be released, no one seems to be sure what to do with him. Should he be sent to a prison-like facility, or a more open work camp or a juvenile home? The costs of correctional programs are staggering. New York State spends about $15,000 for every youth in an "open" facility; a small experimental psychiatric program costs $50,000 a year for each youth.

Juvenile authorities try to find jobs for offenders but these are invariably scarce and low-paying, and an unlikely competitor to what they can make on the streets. Time (1977) reports that one 16-year-old who spends the day in a school for delinquents in Manhattan and the night pushing drugs in Harlem has taken as much as $1,000 in four hours with $600 being turned over to the distributor.

Community-Based Correctional Programs

Can such a youngster be saved from the streets? With arguments tightly stacked against institutionalization other alternatives must be

sought. The arguments against correctional institutions run like this: First, there is no acceptable empirical evidence that incarceration prevents crime or recidivism. Second, many studies have shown the destructive impact of correctional institutions. Moos, (1975).

With these considerations aired, efforts have been made to begin several community-based correctional alternatives. In a report carried by Time (1977) some 100 adults in Memphis volunteered to help with probation by befriending and advising problem young people. The report confirmed the fact that this attitude has done more to combat crime than all the federal funds that have gone into social projects, vital as they are. Burdman (Moos, 1975) notes that more than 70% of all offenders can probably be treated in the community, although some may require short-term community-oriented confinement. Moos (1975) believes that there are alternatives to institutionalization which can be tried, including sentencing options such as suspended sentences, fines, victim restitution programs, group therapy programs, vocational, and academic educational programs. Aside from these alternatives offered, the social programs that seem to work best are those that reassert the youngster's individual responsibility. Time (1977).

Group Homes

Group homes are one of the community alternative programs that can be of help to juveniles. In the group home setting, the dwelling or house is often owned or rented by the social service agency. House parents and other staff are usually employed on a salaried basis and there may be several unrelated adults providing services of varying degrees of intensity. Gula, Herstein (Moos, 1975).

Palmer and Rabinow (Moos, 1975) note, however, that many youngsters should not be placed into group home settings, partially due to the fact that they cannot tolerate the level of intimacy prevalent there. Group homes are clearly a vital addition to the community-oriented handling of delinquent youth; however, they also present many unresolved problems of organizational structure, resident placement, and constructive community relationships.

Lerman (Moos, 1975) has reviewed several evaluative studies of institutions for delinquents. He has concluded that residential programs for young delinquents are characterized by high rates of potential failure, regardless of the type of program. He stated that treatment-oriented institutions do not increase the probability of parole success. However, they also do not decrease it.

Effects of Size and Staffing

Moos (1975) revealed that a study of closely matched samples of boys from two institutions showed that those who were organized into smaller living units demonstrated superior progress on several levels, e.g., greater affection and identification with counselors, and a decrease in insecurity and prejudice. Woods et al. (Moos, 1975) found that inmates labeled as "troublemakers" by institutional staff differed significantly from other inmates in the way they perceive their institutionalization. They concluded that residents whose definitions are positive or favorable are the ones who tend to adapt to the program, cooperate with its constraints and make most productive use of its resources.

Moos (1975) conducted a comparative study of resident and staff perceptions of juvenile correctional programs and discovered that staff perceive correctional units more positively than do residents.

Absconding

The question of absconding has been an age-old problem of jails, work camps, juvenile homes and other institutions. Work done in this decade by Clarke and Martin (Moos, 1975) who examined the personality characteristics of absconders and non-absconders found that the personality characteristics of the two groups were remarkably similar. They then sought an explanation for their subjects' behavior in the environment of the schools. Measures of the environment were related to absconding rates. The results revealed that absconding rates were high given one or more of the following conditions: For a short time after admissions and after holidays, on dark winter evenings, on particularly sunny or dull days within a given season, or when absconding had not recently been punished by caning.

Deviant Perceptions and Behavior

In a study by Moos (1975) relating to deviant perceptions and expectations, it was found that delinquents who broke rules in a correctional program perceived that program more deviantly. Rule breakers rate themselves as much less satisfied with the institution, as liking the staff less, as feeling that they have less chance to develop their self-confidence, and importantly, as being more likely to get into trouble in the institution.

Milgram (Moos, 1975) has shown that subjects who are not usually aggressive can be made to behave very aggressively under experimenter and group pressure encouragement. Kurt Lewin, et al. (Moos, 1975) demonstrated that the leadership climate of a group (e.g., authoritarian vs. democratic) markedly increased the amount of aggressive behavior shown by the same

boys in different settings. This aggressive behavior which can be so readily displayed by youngsters is commonly the reason for their contact with the juvenile court system; an institution that was set up on the theory that there was no such thing as a bad boy, or at least none beyond salvage. Time (1977).

Origins of the Juvenile Court

Sarri and Hasenfeld (1976) observe that juvenile courts are inheritors of the English Chancery courts' protective power. Because of this, most juvenile courts in the United States accept the practice of the English system whereby most rights of children are exercised through adult representatives.

Early in the nineteenth century, philanthropists initiated the development of the "house of refuge" as a separate institution for children. By the middle of the century, pressures began to increase for separate court hearings for children. In 1870, some Massachusetts courts arranged for a separate children's docket, followed by courts in New York and Rhode Island in 1898. Then Illinois in 1899 passed an act requiring the first statewide court for children. Its establishment provided a legal mechanism for broad control over youth in which the court was to be a humanitarian institution dedicated to helping children.

On the basis of the concept of parens patriae, the juvenile court was authorized to intervene whenever a juvenile's behavior was problematic for the child, family or society. Because delinquency was viewed as a disease or malady caused by social inequities, juveniles were to be diagnosed and treated "by helping professionals."

By 1928 all but two states had enacted juvenile court statutes largely modeled on the Illinois statute. The court systems were essentially

similar and within the framework of the existing criminal justice systems. For this reason, the juvenile court developed rather like a stepchild in the justice system even though juvenile crime continued to increase and in some states nearly equaled the volume of adult crime.

Juveniles in Jails and Detention

But even with this increase, Sarri (1974) notes that there is no accurate account of the extent of juvenile jailing in the United States. Since reliable information is lacking, it is difficult to compile verifiable records. What is known, however, is that juveniles are jailed both in rural areas where available alternatives for the custody of children are limited, and in larger metropolitan communities, where the volume of children detained is high despite the greater range of alternative facilities. Mattnick and Aikman (Sarri, 1974).

The National Jail Census conducted by the Department of Justice in 1970 reported that a total of 7,800 juveniles were in 4,037 jails on a given day in March 1970, LEAA, 1971 (Sarri, 1974). Sarri further states that this total included only youth in city, county or township facilities that held persons for forty-eight hours or more. Not included in this tally were police lock-ups or drunk tanks, which normally detain persons, including juveniles, for shorter periods, or state-operated jail facilities.

Grant and Nixon (1975) estimate that as many as 100,000 juveniles are held in adult jails each year. In addition, Sarri and Hasenfeld (1976) report that within a year juvenile courts touch the lives of about 4% of all the children under their jurisdiction. They also mention that as many as 90% of the youth have contact with the juvenile system in some city precincts.

Jurisdiction

The juvenile court is vested with various types of jurisdiction. Levin and Sarri (1974) have enumerated three: (1) proceedings involving juveniles who have allegedly committed statutory offenses, where the case has been withdrawn from the ordinary process of criminal justice because of the offender's age; (2) proceedings involving behavior which if performed by an adult would not be criminal and would not result in state intervention; and (3) proceedings involving the dependent and/or neglected status of juveniles.

The researchers note that some states use different labels to denote the same behavior. Thirty-nine states categorize juvenile law-breakers as "delinquent." In the remaining states, the statutes use what are intended to be less stigmatizing names--"offenders," "wards of the courts," or simply "children." Ironically, "delinquent" was originally considered a neutral decriminalized term. Recent statutory provisions have generally retained the use of the "delinquent" category.

Age for Original Jurisdiction

Levin and Sarri (1974) hold that one of the most significant limitations on the juvenile court's jurisdictions is the age of the child. The philosophy of the juvenile court movement was founded on the assumption that children, because of their age, are generally incapable of criminal behavior. There is today, however, no agreement on the age at which a child is considered an adult. In fact, many recent statutory changes have occurred in this area--age limits have been both lowered and raised. Adult penal codes frequently limit criminal offenses to those who have reached age 7.

The authors further state that the maximum age for original jurisdiction is 17 years in 33 states. In 12 states the maximum age is 16, and in the remaining states the court can adjudicate only those 15 and under. There are no longer any states where original jurisdiction extends to age 21, as was true until a few years ago in California. Three states still set a lower maximum age for males than for females, but such a distinction has been held unconstitutional by state courts.

Maximum Age for Continuing Jurisdiction

Once the juvenile court's jurisdiction has been attached, the maximum age for original jurisdiction is no longer a limitation on the court's authority. Forty-one states grant the juvenile court continuing jurisdiction over offenders until they are 21.

Limitation of Jurisdiction

Sarri and Hasenfeld (1976) argue that the major challenge now to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court is over status offenses--truancy, incorrigibility--those acts or conditions which, if they involved adults, would not be crimes. In the processing of juveniles, few distinctions are made between status offenders and law violators.

Although status offense statutes have been struck down as unconstitutional in several cases (Gesicki vs. Oswald, 1971), most case decisions have supported them, using parens patriae as justification for continued intervention (Blondheim vs. State, 1975). In recent years status offenses have comprised almost 40% of referrals to courts. Law-enforcement agencies and parents are the major sources of referrals resulting in the coexistence of different input mechanisms to which the courts must adapt. Sarri and Hasenfeld (1976).

Jailing Practices

According to Sarri (1974), a need exists for adequate information on national trends, but some information is available about the relative use of jails for juveniles among individual states. In the National Jail Census, jails holding juveniles were found in nearly every state except Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Although the number varied in each state, it is nevertheless clear that this problem exists nationally.

Sarri points out that of the 7,800 juveniles in jails, 66% were awaiting trial, compared to 50.9% of the adult jail population who were awaiting trial or other legal action. Some argue that, although undesirable, it may be best to confine juveniles in jails when no other alternative is available. However, it is impossible to credit the validity of a rationale for sentencing them to jail under any circumstances.

A survey of Indiana jails and lockups reveals even more serious problems, Culberston and Decker (Sarri, 1974). They reported that 98% of the inmates were given no physical exercise programs, and 75% had no counseling services or visiting rooms. Only one-half reported having separate facilities for youth out of a total capacity of 860 beds for juveniles. Sarri laments the increase during the past several years of the jailing of youth which reverses a long-term trend toward reduction in jailing from the nineteenth into the twentieth century.

What Offenses Have Jailed Juveniles Committed

In upper New York State, according to a recent NCCD survey (1971), 43% of the children held in local jails were allegedly PINS offenders ("persons in need of supervision"), who had not been charged with a

misdemeanor or felony. Sarri (1974). It was observed that a majority of these youth were being held because no detention facilities were available. The damaging effects on juveniles of a jail experience becomes all the more tragic with the realization that many of them pose no actual threat to society, but on the contrary, need its help in other ways.

Sarri (1974) makes the point that although the large majority of the juveniles held in jail or in detention are males, the types of offenses for which they are held generally differ decidedly from those of their female counterparts. Females are more likely to be detained for status offenses and are held longer. Velimesis (Sarri, 1974).

A Montana jail survey, Logan (Sarri, 1974) reported that dependent and neglected children were held in jail "when necessary," and more than 50% of the counties reported that juveniles were put in jail as a "deterrent," without any type of formal charge.

Sex and Race of Youth Preferred

Sarri and Hasenfeld (1976) point out that there is a great deal of controversy concerning the effects of these two variables on the processing of youth through the juvenile justice system. For example. it has been asserted that while females are less likely than males to be referred to the court, they are likely to be handled more severely. Pawlak (Sarri, Hasenfeld, 1976). Similarly, there is conflicting evidence as to whether race prejudices the decision-making processes of the juvenile court.

Males are three to four times more likely to be processed by the courts than females, while non-white youths are three times more likely to be processed by the courts than white youth. (Sarri, 1976). At the same time it has also been observed by Time (1977) that more girls are getting involved in juvenile crime at an increasing rate. From 1970 to

1975, the arrest rate of girls under 18 for serious offenses climbed 40% vs. 24% for boys. In 1975, 11% of all juveniles arrested for violent crimes were females.

In regards to previous delinquent behavior it was found, Vinter, et al. (1976) that boys and girls are about equally likely to have skipped school, drunk alcohol or used hashish. Girls are much more likely than boys to have run away from home, whereas boys are about twice as likely to have committed the cited property and person crimes.

The LEAA inmate survey (1974), reported that "jail inmates are predominantly male, typically young, and generally poor and undereducated." Minority groups were disproportionately represented. Forty-two percent of jail inmates were black, and other minorities equalled 2%, for a total of 44% minority population in the jails. Sarri (1974).

Case Processing

Sarri and Hasenfeld state that the juvenile court is the only community agency with the power to change the legal statutes of youth. Fulfillment of this mandate is the most crucial task of the court because the changes in the statutes of youth are permanent (except in the rare case of formal expungement) and may have lasting, disruptive consequences on their lives. At the least, the outcome of court intervention into the lives of young people is uncertain. For this reason schools, peers, parents, police and even processed youth themselves may react negatively to even the suspicion of court intervention. Gold (Sarri, Hasenfeld, 1976). Most complainants and youth perceive and anticipate coercive and negative action by the court, and this impression is reinforced by public media, public agencies, and individuals. Even on cases dismissed from courts, workers often threaten processing with more coercive consequences if the youth reappears.

Juvenile Detention

Detention is a significant phase in the juvenile justice process because it constitutes the initial critical contact with the system for many youth. The detention process itself has been largely ignored, and little effort has been made toward study, change or innovation. As a result, few people are aware of the overwhelmingly negative aspects of most juveniles' experiences with detention. Sarri (1974).

More than one million young people are held in juvenile detention and adult jails each year. Sarri, Hasenfeld (1976). Detention in physically restricting facilities built exclusively for juveniles has generally been characterized as progressive, compared to incarceration in adult jails. However, despite having some more healthful or humane aspects than jails, detention facilities often resemble them. As Sarri (1974) says elsewhere, confinement in a detention facility may be similarly harmful, particularly when the youth has not committed a criminal offense.

Who Is Detained--and Why?

The typical detainee is male, median age 14.7 years, who lives in a metropolitan area. Nearly two-thirds or 63% of the 11,748 youth in the LEAA census (1974) were awaiting court action. Twenty-nine percent were adjudicated delinquents; four percent were dependent and neglected children; and another four percent were awaiting transfer to other jurisdictions.

In Sumner's survey of Californian facilities reported by Sarri (1974) it was found that few juveniles had defense counsel at detention hearings despite the right to it. Most hearings took less than three minutes. The overall rate of detention was 36% of the total number of youth arrested, varying between 19% and 66% among counties. Blacks were

detained more frequently than whites, as were juveniles from broken homes and those with prior records.

Are Black Youths More Delinquent Than White Youths?

The evidence is ambiguous. Williams and Gold (Vinter et al., 1976) in a recent national survey did find that blacks were slightly more seriously (but not more frequently) delinquent, but the differences were much too small to account for the extent of over-representation of blacks in correctional programs.

Considerable evidence suggests that blacks are dealt with more severely than whites at various stages in the juvenile justice process, and that such inequity increases with greater penetration in the juvenile justice system. Barton, forthcoming (Vinter et al., 1976).

Probation

Levin and Sarri, (1974) state that probation is the most frequently used disposition and is statutorily sanctioned in every state. The most common statutory pattern provide for an open-ended period of probation, terminating at the latest when the juvenile reaches 21 or the state's age of majority.

Records

Forty-nine states, by statute, guarantee that the status of an adjudication in the juvenile court is not criminal. By this means juveniles are relieved of the penalties applicable to adults who have been convicted of various crimes, for example, inability to hold government jobs and various other disqualifications. Levin, Sarri (1974).

The following pages contain a literature review on a radically new program for dealing with the problems of youth. Although new, it has

been widely acclaimed wherever it has been used and has been of immense help, not only in assisting youngsters at juvenile homes but as a means of "delinquency diversion" in school systems. Boehm (1977). The program is known as Positive Peer Culture or more commonly called PPC. Harry Vorrath is a recognized authority in this area and his books will be used to explain the workings of the program.

Vorrath (1972) points out that the basic idea behind the program is the recognition that young people in trouble have social problems which can be effectively solved with the help of their peers, provided they are given a healthy environment where they know they will not be threatened or hurt.

The PPC program recognizes that young people are deeply influenced by their peers and views the peer group as a resource, not as a liability. In Vorrath and Brendtro's (1974) words, "Just as peer group influence can foster problems, so also can the peer process be used to solve problems."

The Program's Origin

Positive Peer Culture was started in the late 1950s for delinquent youth in New Jersey. Under the guidance of McCorckle, Bixby and others, a peer-oriented treatment model called Guided Group Interaction was developed.

Due to certain initial problems, the program was modified, expanded and refined until it arrived at its present form. The result is a remarkable treatment methodology now known as Positive Peer Culture. (1974).

Its Goal and Purpose

As Vorrath (1972) explains it, "rather than teaching the student to be selfish,"--to think only of himself, "PPC teaches him how to care about himself and others." It is a total system for building

positive youth subcultures and uses the power of the peer group in a productive way. (1974). Youngsters in PPC groups learn how to identify problems and how to work toward their solution. In group sessions and in day-to-day activities the goal is to fully involve young people in the helping process.

Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) go on to say that PPC is unlike the traditional treatment approach. Instead of asking whether a person wants to receive help it asks the individual to offer help. As the person gives and becomes of value to others he increases his own feelings of self-worth and develops a positive self-image.

Caring

It is pointed out that if there was any one rule for the program it would be that individuals should care for each other. The authors (1974) observe that caring means desiring the best for the other person. But here this concept may meet a snag, since positive caring behavior is rarely popular with youths. In fact, negative harmful behavior frequently is more readily accepted. For this reason PPC imposes specific rules to enhance caring, although specifics are not a basic part of its program. Once caring for others becomes fashionable and customary, hurting others should disappear.

In discussing its overall approach, Vorrath and Brendtro make it clear that Positive Peer Culture is not a permissive, laissez-faire approach but places great demands on youth. Although adults remain in charge, young people have the responsibility of helping one another.

Emphasis on Helping

In Positive Peer Culture the entire process centers around helping

each member of the group. One is not expected to master all his weaknesses before he can contribute something to others. Instead it is recognized that the very act of helping others is the first vital step in conquering one's personal problems. "In reaching out to help another, a person creates his own proof of worthiness: He is now of value to someone." Vorrath (1974).

Because of this emphasis on offering help, PPC groups are not empowered to punish or hurt a member. Everyone is encouraged to exhibit concern, not to coerce or apply intimidatory pressure. In seeking to help others, the youngster must be made to realize that he is also helping himself.

Creating the Environment

Positive Peer Culture does not promise youth a world of ease, security or peace; rather it seeks to create a climate where all behavior that hurts another person is challenged. It seeks to arouse anxiety in the young person so that he begins to question his value-system. As this is done, the youth is made aware of his lack of concern for himself and others and is thus made aware of his selfishness and the need to care for others. (1974).

The PPC program does not offer youth a sheltered environment where they are sheltered from the challenges of the real world. Instead they are taught to be independent of adults since it will be necessary for them to relate to others in ever-demanding ways.

PPC as a Challenge

As was pointed out in the foregoing, Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) hold that PPC does not attempt to pamper the youngster but makes him

aware that he must be prepared to face reality. Young people are asked to concern themselves with their behavior in the current situation and not to become entangled in a search for answers for past experiences. This is not to say that PPC purports to block out the past. Ones life's story may be important to get the group to understand a person's behavior so that he can be better helped. But the purpose in relating ones past is not to primarily give insight or perspective but to help the group see how the youngster views himself.

The program should be structured in such a way as to remind the youth that they can be productive human beings. Its purpose is to set expectations high enough to challenge the young individuals to achieve all they are capable of achieving.

Of course, PPC does not turn over every decision-making process into the hands of the students. Adults are there to listen and direct but never to assume a commandeering attitude. Adults assign responsibility and then teach the students to follow through on that responsibility.

While PPC is oriented toward the teaching of values, Vorrath and Brendtro make it clear that this emphasis is not on the teaching of middle-class values. They reiterate that rather there is one basic value--the value of the human being. Such a value, they stress, is not dependent on culture or status, but is timeless. "Anything that hurts any person is considered wrong, and people are assumed to be responsible for caring for one another."

Relabeling

In an effort to prevent young people from hurting both themselves and others, especially if they see criminal types as "mature and masculine," Vorrath and Brendtro suggest the idea of relabeling. For example, if mass rape is cool, it can be viewed as "messing over a helpless person."

If stealing is slick, it is "sneaky and dumb."

They go on to say that reference to positive behavior as "great," or "intelligent" can help make such behavior more desirable. On the other hand, negative behavior can be termed childish and destructive and thus help establish this behavior as undesirable.

Identifying Problems

Since communication is important in the program, PPC abandons all complex terminologies and focuses on an easily understood set of labels covering the major problems young people may encounter. In effect, what is done is that all students and staff share a common language and are thus better able to communicate. The terms used include these labels: (1) Low self-image (2) Inconsiderate of others (3) Inconsiderate of self (4) Authority problem (5) Mislead others (6) Easily misled (7) Aggravates others (8) Easily angered (9) Stealing (10) Alcohol or drug problem (11) Lying (12) Fronting.

Grouping by Sex

PPC groups are constituted of youth of the same sex. Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) maintain that research has shown that delinquency is most times peer related and is prevalent among males who operate in small groups or gangs.

Group Size

The ideal number of a PPC group is nine members. The authors justify this figure by stating that if a smaller number is used the process may be too slow and boring because of limited input. At this stage the group leader tends to be prominent.

On the other hand, should the group contain more than nine

individuals, the members do not really become the focus of the group and some may never get the attention and contacts necessary to help them change. Moreover, some students do not have sufficient opportunity to participate in group activities and the shy, withdrawn youths may be lost in the large number.

Guidelines in Grouping

Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) believe that the best groups are homogeneous with respect to age, sex, maturity and sophistication. Conversely however, they note that groups function best when they are somewhat heteregeneous in personality and problem types.

Strong, difficult youth should be placed in a group where both students and staff are strong enough to avoid being maneuvered or overpowered. The placement of brothers or sisters in the same group is not recommended.

Creating a Climate for Change

Possibly the most difficult role for the staff is in encouraging the expression of problems while setting sufficient limits so that ultimate chaos does not occur. It means therefore that the staff does not just sit passively, hoping that the students will become responsible. Staff members have to be totally committed to the caring process, not being maternalistically soft or maudlin but creating a positive culture that requires both supportive and confrontive roles. (1974).

The Group Leader

He acts as a special teacher or coach. Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) make it clear that he is not a therapist or authoritarian although he may portray an authoritative air. He is there to instruct and motivate, always making the group responsible for working out problems.

His primary task is to be helpful. He should have a stable personality, possess leadership skills and be able to inspire confidence in others. Although he does not adopt the profanity or cultural language of the group members, he should be able to understand their communication. He should show active interest in their pursuits to avoid being labeled as uninvolved by the members.

The Group Leader's Role in Meetings

The group leader instructs the members in the procedures for running effective meetings and ensures that the meetings are conducted in a productive spirit.

In the actual group meeting, the leader sits behind a desk and the group sits in a circle. The authors (1974) believe in this layout because as they state, it sets the "tone of interaction." In this setting, the leader is not a member of the group but is set apart in a position to influence the interactions as he sees fit.

In another work Vorrath (1972) points out that the group leader cannot force the group members to accept responsibility for each other. He can only educate, indicate positives and guide the students to use their wills to help each other. He makes it clear, however, that the group leader can manipulate these young people into becoming aware of one another. The use of guilt can be useful in directing responsibility to one another. In a well-established group Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) note that the leader makes few interruptions in the discussion until the last few minutes of the session, when he provides a summarization of the discussion.

Training

Individuals sometimes ask about the type of people that make good

leaders and the training necessary to become effective. Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) indicate that leaders can emerge from various backgrounds. "No particular profession dominates the field." They admit that although formal training may be an asset, concerned individuals with no formal education can become successful group leaders.

Vorrath and Brendtro discourage the use of leaders who alternate in conducting meetings even if it is done as a training exercise. They point out that the group suffers on account of this because if it is forced to alternate between two leaders, inconsistencies can develop that will have a negative effect on group unity.

Group Sessions

It is common practice for group meetings to follow an agenda. Meetings run for 90 minutes and are never shortened or lengthened. They justify this by noting that if a meeting is adjusted on account of the way it is going then the group will soon be able to control the length of the meeting by varying behavior patterns.

In addition, each meeting follows a general pattern: (1) Reporting problems, (2) awarding the meeting, (3) problem solving, (4) summary.

Time of Meetings

Vorrath (1972) suggests that meetings should be held five times a week. In schools and community-based programs, groups generally meet Monday through Friday at the close of the school day. In residential programs, where possible, sessions should be held so as to avoid two continuous days with meetings.

The authors believe that evening meetings are best because at that time most individuals are more relaxed, their guards are down and

they speak more freely about themselves than they do during the hustle of the day. In addition, there should be no interruptions during the meetings.

Cultivating a Positive Peer Culture

Although problem solving occurs in the group meetings Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) maintain that youth must assume the responsibility for managing problems whenever they arise. Groups exercise this responsibility through a series of procedures called the three C's of Control." 1. Checking. As a student begins to exhibit a problem, the group gives him a cue to check himself. The members simply say, "check yourself." 2. Confronting. In this instance the group members show their concern by challenging negative behavior. 3. Containing. On occasions because neither checking nor confronting may be effective, members may need to resort to restraint. However, this physical force is used only for serious incidents. "The intent is always to reestablish the individual's self-control as quickly as possible."

Decision for Release

It is the group's responsibility to recommend a student for release when he no longer needs the support of the group. Generally the youth may have had previous home visits to test whether or not he is able to cope with community pressures.

As Vorrath and Brendtro (1974) note, in deciding on a recommendation for release the group should evaluate the individual's behavior and values. After the issues have been fully discussed, each member gives his individual recommendation on whether or not the student is ready for release. Although unanimity of opinion is the ideal, the group leader can make exceptions to this requirement.

After group recommendation takes place, the staff considers the question. Their decision is passed on to the group at some time outside the regular meeting so as not to disrupt its smooth interactive tone.

After Care

Once the youth leaves the program he should be able to reestablish himself into everyday community life. Since this may not be easy, there must be attempts made not only to prepare him to live in the community but to readjust positively to its pressures. Provisions for positive peer associations in the community should be made so that the youth can continue to live positively and thereby contribute to the upbuilding of society. Vorrath, Brendtro (1974).

A Case Study

In answer to the oft-repeated question, "Is PPC effective in public schools?" mention will be made of a study which took place in four schools in Berrien County. In order to combat delinquency before it reaches the court, Boehm (1977) found out that Positive Peer Culture had had a positive effect on students, had helped to make them better individuals, and had assisted in creating a more favorable school environment.

In the light of reports that schools in many cities are "criminal dens," Time (1977), it is encouraging to read of the impressive impact of Positive Peer Culture.

After the year's study in Berrien County, Boehm noted that truancy was reduced significantly (31.7%), although the number of truant students did not decline. This reduction is laudable if truancy is considered with respect to a large city, such as New York City, where each day an

estimated 200,000 kids are truant. At least some of them are fleeing the danger of the classroom. Time (1977).

Boehm further mentions that marijuana consumption did not decline but the use of hard drugs was reduced dramatically. Moreover, the students were so impressed with the program that they voted it an overwhelming vote of confidence. In his recommendations Boehm suggested "that peer influence be used as widely as possible in Berrien County to create a Culture of Caring."

Conclusion

A Call for Action--Juveniles Deserve Better

Sarri (1974) believes that immediate, drastic changes are needed to effect improved conditions for jailed juveniles. She asserts that "potent action is urgently needed." Although interest has been shown at the state and federal levels in enhancing the juvenile justice systems, primarily with programs based on intervention and diversion, she affirms that much more needs to be done. Top priority should be given to changing the poor jailing and detention practices. But this must be done soon, for unless states undertake the task of modifying statutes and policies, a large segment of the current youth generation will continue to be unjustifiably harmed.

Is There a Typical Delinquent?

Generalizations of this sort may be somewhat simplistic, but as Vinter et al. (1971) assumes, if there is one, he is likely to be male, non-white, about sixteen years old, and lower class. He may be in a correctional institution because he has committed a property crime (although if female she probably has been committed for a status offense),

and has had previous contacts with the police or juvenile court. He had probably been on probation or even in an institution at least once previously. Vinter et al. (1971) do not call him a devil, but admit he is not an angel--for he may readily admit to drinking, using drugs and being a truant. But neither is he a seasoned criminal since he probably had not frequently engaged in serious criminal behavior such as robbery or breaking and entering. As far as sex is concerned, girls are far less frequently or seriously delinquent but still had considerable prior contact with the juvenile system.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

As stated in Chapter I, the objective of this study was to collect and analyze information about juvenile delinquents for whom services have been provided through the treatment program at the Berrien County Juvenile Center. A secondary purpose was to provide a reliable basis for planning for the treatment unit and program modifications.

This chapter presents the type of research conducted, the description of the population, the instrument used, the methodology of data collection, a description of the statistical design and the methodological assumption.

Type of Research

This study employs a descriptive survey, based on the typology of Isaac, 1975, (Valazquez, Jr., 1977). A descriptive study, noted Isaac, describes systematically the facts of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately. This study can be considered a descriptive survey because it seeks to examine and evaluate the degree of congruence of opinion held by the respondents concerning the Juvenile Center's program and its effects on them.

Population

The population for this study was all students who were at the Center from 1974-1976. The total number secured for this study was one hundred and four and an attempt was made to obtain information from

everyone. No stratified random sampling was therefore necessary. Based on sex, there were four girls and one hundred boys in the survey.

Research Instrument

To gather the data involved, it was necessary to design an appropriate instrument. A seven-part questionnaire was designed through consultation with the Juvenile Center directors and included the following information. (See Appendix I).

A. Demographic Data

B. BC JC Residential Program Data

C. Arrest Record

D. Educational Record

E. Employment Record

F. Community Activities

G. Personal Hobbies

Procedures for Collecting Data

The list of students which constituted the population was obtained from the Center and, as a means of speeding up data collection, questionnaires were sent to those residing outside Berrien County. The letters explained the purpose of the survey and asked the respondents to return the completed questionnaires in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelopes. (See Appendix II).

Repeaters of the program were interviewed personally during their free time at the Center. As with all other interviewees they were asked to be frank and truthful and were promised anonymity. The students met with the researcher in a small private room on an individual basis and answered the questions orally. The procedure lasted for about an hour for each individual.

For the students who were at the community, the process was more time-consuming. It was, however, facilitated to an extent by the addresses and phone numbers provided by the Center. It was necessary nevertheless, to ascertain at what time the students would be home, just where their homes were located, or at what place they were employed. Often several calls were necessary before receiving affirmative word on exactly when to visit, and many times visits could be made only at night. During the call, the parents were told the purpose of the interview and permission was requested to visit. On the whole, they were cooperative but there were some who refused to allow their children to participate in the study. Unlike the process at the Center, there was on occasion a parent during the interview who was interested in what was being asked. No questions were ever objected to and some even provided additional information for the researcher. (See Appendix II).

A Description of the Statistical Design

The major statistical method for examining the data was discriminant analysis. It was used because it can be helpful in identifying factors that discriminate among groups in terms of their demographic characteristics such as is found in Section A of the questionnaire. With respect to the success possibilities, the researcher was interested in discovering factors that could determine success or failure. Based on that data, multiple regression analysis was utilized to determine whether or not the factors arrived at could be predictive of success at juvenile programs. Should this be possible, given certain variables, one could possibly predict success in this or other programs.

Methodological Assumption

It is assumed that the respondents and interviewees were trustworthy and honest in their responses to the questions in the questionnaires.

Chapter IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present an analysis of the data collected from the questionnaries. This will be given in the order as it is outlined in the questionnaire under the general headings of demographic data, Berrien County Juvenile Center Residential Program data, release status, drug use, school attendance record, employment record, community activities and personal hobbies.

Demographic Data

Of the total population of 104, 38 or 37% responded to the questionnaire. Thirty-six or 95% were males and 2 or 5% were females. Classification into racial groups revealed that there were 32% whites, 66% blacks and 1% Spanish American. The survey sample ratio of black to white was therefore 2.1/1 which differs from the BCJC admissions ratio of 1.4/1. The difference as is demonstrated here is not significant since alpha is greater than .05.

At the time of the interviews, the median age of the youngsters was 17. Eight percent were 15 years old, 16% were 16, 28% were 17, 39% were 18 and 16% were 19. The majority of respondents lived either in a rented single family dwelling (51%), or in a family-owned dwelling (37%). Apartment private housing and trailers accounted for an additional 9% and 1% respectively. The median residence was therefore rented single family dwelling with a resultant very significant distribution of frequencies,

alpha less than .001.

Between 1973-1977, 55% of the youths had never moved from their residences. Sixteen percent had moved either once or twice and only 5% had moved four or five times. The result was that the median number of times the families moved was none which demonstrates a very significant distribution of frequencies, with alpha less than .001.

The data on the marital status of parents also revealed a distribution of frequencies that was significant with alpha less than .02. The largest percentage of the parents, 27%, were married and living together, with a considerable proportion divorced--22%, widowed numbered 16%, with the "never married" totalling 16%. In addition, 8% were married but were not living together and 11% were legally separated. The median status of the parents of the respondents was in the category of "divorced."

Education never seemed to have achieved priority in the lives of the respondents' parents. An analysis of their educational level demonstrated that on the grade school level, the distribution of frequencies was significant with alpha less than .001, and both parents having completed grade school. Similarly, on the high school level, there was a significant distribution of frequencies, with neither parent having completed high school accounting for 35% of the total. The median educational level in this category was "mother only." However, in 65% of the cases, at least one parent had finished high school.

BCJC Residential Program Data

The median age at entry of the program was 16. The data reveals a significant distribution of frequencies, with an alpha less than .001.

Approximately 95% of the youth at the Center had at least one exposure to the program, while 5% had two. Of the amount of months

spent there, the median length was from four to six, with the range spreading from one to three to ten to twelve months.

The data on the initial release to the first arrest shows that after 30 days 8% (or 3) of the respondents of those released were arrested, 6% were arrested after 60 days, 14% after 180 days, 8% after a year, and 3% after more than a year. Significantly, 21 (58%) had no arrest up to the time of the study. There was, therefore, no median time prior to the first arrest. The information on the type of crime committed also reveals that there was no median type of crime, since some 58% reported none.

On the question of the total number of arrests following initial release from the program a clear majority of 58% stated none, with the next highest number 22%, reporting one arrest. Six percent reported having been arrested at least six times however.

The median change in the severity of crime for those re-arrested was "less severe" than the first crime, (53%), and 40% indicating no change and 7% "more severe." In 93% of the cases, however, the new crime was no different or less severe.

The next data group provides information on the change in severity of crime for those re-arrested. Of the total number of 15 who were, none was charged with a more serious offence than he or she had previously committed. In fact, within as many as 180 days 6% had committed "less severe" offenses.

The grade level of thse young offenders on entering the Residential Treatment Program (RTP) ranged from 7 to 11. The median grade level was therefore grade 9 with the frequencies showing a very significant distribution of less than .001. The median grade level after RTP was, however, still 9 within the same range, but with a slight increase (2-4%) in the higher grades and a commensurate decrease in the lower grades.

Achievement level (grade) before RTP showed 72% of the youngsters below grade six with 3% above twelve. The remaining 25% were between grades six and twelve, with a median achievement of below grade six. After RTP, achievement level improved on the lower end somewhat with 52% being below grade six (compared to 72% before), but those within that 20% difference only managed to achieve grade six status. On the higher end of the achievement scale 7% were above grade 12, compared to 3% before, but as the distribution reveals, the median achievement level remained below grade six.

Group Meetings and Positive Peer Culture (PPC)

Almost three-fourths (70%) of the youths believed that the group meetings helped them to care more about others, with a smaller number, 60%, agreeing that the meetings had helped them to enjoy returning to school. As to its influence in helping them to become more responsible, 76% answered affirmatively.

In keeping with its name, Positive Peer Culture seemed to have had a positive impact by increasing their respect for others--84%, motivating them toward learning--84%, helping them to pursue a career--72%, and helping them to stay out of trouble with the law--83%. Answers to the above questions were indicated by either yes or no, demonstrating that there was really positive response.

Residential School Program

As to whether the residential school program helped them to return to school on a permanent basis, respondents revealed a bit of ambivalence, with 54% answering in the affirmative and 46% in the negative. Because of an alpha greater than .20, there was an insignificant distribution of frequencies. In response to whether or not the residential program enabled

them to learn better than at the school they previously attended, 80% said yes, with 20% disagreeing.

Release Status

The data on the release status revealed that the distribution of frequencies was very significant, with alpha less than .001. Thirty-seven percent had no supervision after they were released, 13% were sent to group homes, 5% were under the guidance of the Department of Social Services and 45% were given aftercare. None was under probation. Since 82% of released persons were divided between no supervision and aftercare, the difference between frequencies was not significant--alpha greater than .20.

Drug Use

In a general question as to whether or not they had used drugs, 22% answered "never" and 68% said they had used them both "before and after RTP". Five percent said they had only used them either "before or after RTP". The median incidence of drug usage therefore was "before and after RTP".

As to marijuana usage, all the respondents had used it either "only before" or "after" the program or continuously. The median incidence of marijuana usage was however, both "before and after RTP". Only negligible responses were given to other drugs.

School Attendance

The data on the distribution of frequencies of school attendance was very significant, alpha less than .001. A breakdown reveals that 16% neither attended school "before" or after RTP", 41% "before RTP only", 5% "after RTP only" and 38% "before and after RTP". The median school

attendance was therefore "before RTP only". Significantly, 57% of released persons were not in school after RTP.

Employment

The median employment of the youth was "neither before or after RTP", 51%. Fourteen percent were employed "before RTP only" and 35% "after RTP only". It is noteworthy that 65% of released persons were unemployed after the program.

Community Activities Involvement

General

Approximately 27% of the released persons were involved "neither before or after RTP". Twenty-seven percent were involved before RTP only, 14% "after RTP only" and 32% "before and after RTP". Alpha was greater than .05, therefore the distribution of frequencies was not significant. The median involvement in communities activities appear to have been "before RTP". Fifty-four percent were apparently not involved in community activities of any sort following release from the RTP.

Church

The distribution of frequencies for church activities was very significant with alpha less than .001. Forty-nine percent were involved in church activities both "before and after RTP", 17% "after RTP only" and 34% "before RTP only". The median involvement in church activities was therefore "after RTP only". Sixty-six percent of respondents were involved in church activities following release from RTP and 39% of the total sample acknowledged involvement in church activities following release from RTP. In addition, 61% of the total sample responded to the question.

Personal Hobbies

General

The median incidence of personal hobbies was "before and after RTP"--an impressive 92%. Five percent had hobbies "before RTP", and 3% neither "before or after".

Athletics

Eleven percent had participated in athletics before RTP only, 6% "after RTP only", and 83% "before and after". The latter was therefore the median involvement.

Television Watching

As was with the aforementioned, the median incidence of TV watching was "before and after RTP", with 62% of 13 respondents answering affirmatively. Since only 55% of the total sample responded to this question no inference can be made because 92% (35 respondents) is required to do so.

Summary

According to the data presented, the demographic information revealed significant distribution of frequencies in nearly all cases. The only exception was the difference in race.

There was no median number of arrests following initial release from the Center and the median change in the severity of crime for those re-arrested was "less severe". Significantly, in 93% of the cases, the new crime was no different or less severe.

The median grade level both "before and after RTP" showed no change.

Both the group meetings and the PPC program were held in high esteem by the respondents. However, although they indicated that the school program had helped them it had not assisted them in returning to

permanently. In fact, 57% of released persons were not in school after the Residential Treatment Program.

Eighty-two percent of released persons were divided between "no supervision and "aftercare".

Apparently 54% of the respondents were not involved in community activities of any sort following release from the RTP.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the way youths who had been placed at the Berrien County Juvenile Center assessed the impact of the treatment program. With this data it would then be possible to provide the administration of the Juvenile Court and the Juvenile Center with a method for the evaluation of the treatment program. Its purpose was to collect and analyze information about juvenile delinquents for whom services had been provided through the treatment program, and to provide a reliable basis for the planning for the treatment unit and program modifications.

Many important studies have been made concerning juvenile problems. The scourge of juvenile delinquency is increasing at alarming proportions. The social agency that has since 1899 tried to meet this challenge is the Juvenile Court, and in an effort to assist juvenile offenders the court has devised several measures of treatment. Some of these measures are probation, foster home placement, and institutional rehabilitation.

Because of the steady increase in juvenile court cases since 1950, both treatment and preventive measures have had to be improved considerably. Research relating to the causes of deviant behavior has helped in this regard. In a study conducted by Moos (1975) he discovered that environmental and social setting influences are themselves important determinants of aggression. Mitchell (1975) subsequently pointed out that delinquency rates are higher in crowded neighborhoods.

In 1977 Time reported that the most important factor of delinquency is the breakdown of the family. Research supports the hypothesis that the family unit is the strongest agency in combating delinquency. Davies, Davies and Sinclair (Moos, 1975) have indicated that the family environment had a vital impact on probationers and lower rates were found for boys from homes where the father was warm and affectionate toward the son, but was a firm disciplinarian.

Lacking the support of a strong family unit, the emphasis must remain on effective preventive measures. General prevention by the provision of social welfare measures and specific prevention by the provision of detection and treatment services for juveniles who develop behavior problems have contributed significantly to alleviating delinquency problems. Positive Peer Culture programs have left their impact and some juvenile centers have at last found a workable formula for assisting deviant youth. Many problems remain and the end is not yet in sight. The problems will call out the very best from researchers.

This study analyzed data collected from the use of a questionnaire and despite the disappointing response largely due to the population, some worthwhile conclusions resulted. Information gathered from the respondents was checked and compared to official files if these were available, in an effort to ensure accuracy and completeness. Where discrepancies arose, the data on the file was used. If there was reason to doubt authenticity, the information from all the respondents was discarded so as to maintain veracity and uniformity in later analyses.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the data presented in Chapter IV the following conclusions are presented for considerations:

1. The respondents were largely black who lived in a rented

single-family dwelling with a divorced parent.

2. The median employment status revealed that the father only was employed.

3. The median educational level for both parents was completion of grade school, but in 65% of the cases, at least one parent had finished high school.

4. The median age at entry at the Residential Treatment Program (RTP) was 16.

5. The median length of stay at the RTP was four to six months.

6. There was no median number of arrests following initial release.

7. The median change in the severity of crime for the re-arrested was "less severe".

8. The grade level of the respondents before and after the RTP was 9.

9. The achievement level before and after the RTP was below grade 6.

10. The group meetings were successful in helping the respondents to relate better to others and in helping them to enjoy school.

11. Positive Peer Culture was influential in assisting them in pursuing more productive lives.

12. The residential school program enabled them to learn more than at the school they had previously attended, but did not help them to return to school permanently.

13. Drugs, particularly marijuana, were used before and after RTP.

14. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents were not in school after RTP.

15. Sixty-five percent of the respondents were unemployed after RTP.

16. Fifty-four percent of the respondents were apparently not

involved in community activities of any sort following release from RTP.

17. Sixty-six percent of the respondents were involved in church activities following release from RTP.

18. Thirty-nine percent of the total sample acknowledged involvement in church activities following release from RTP.

19. The median involvement in hobbies, athletics and T.V. viewing was "before and after RTP."

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Supervision be continued after the youths leave the Center.

2. Studies be developed to investigate the relationship between no supervision and repeated offenders.

3. The PPC program be continued.

4. Released persons be helped to secure a place in local schools as soon as they leave the Center.

5. Studies be developed to determine the possible cause or causes of released persons lack of involvement in community activities and to encourage greater participation.

6. The Center serve in an advocacy role in motivating employers to provide job slots for released persons.

7. The Center teach saleable, particularly vocational skills that would make released persons more marketable in the larger community.

8. The residential school program continue its academic program but integrate it with the teaching of social skills so as to expose the youths to other activities that can bring personal fulfillment after release.

Recommendations for Future Evaluations

1. Followup field studies appear to be of very limited value to program evaluators in the field of corrections. Such was found to be the case in this instance as well. After a lot of time and effort had been expended, virtually no data was generated that could be applied to the total population of program participants. Furthermore, information secured directly from former participants of the residential treatment program was found to be largely unreliable. In many instances, evaluators were forced to turn to official records for complete and/or authentic data.

2. Success criteria need to be specifically stated in measurable terms. This would facilitate the evaluation of program outcomes in each area of concern, be it attitudes, interpersonal skills, or specific kinds of behavior.

3. It would appear that descriptive data regarding indications or a lack of attitudinal and behavioral change in the direction of specifically stated program objectives might be more easily secured and developed within the setting of the Center itself. This would have the added advantage of having all participants at the evaluators' disposal.

Measuring instruments for eliciting such data might be administered at strategic points throughout the treatment program. This would include, of course, the time of each participant's entrance into the program and some period just prior to his or her release.

4. Data from instrumental, observational, and documentary sources would seem to be sufficiently informative for determining the effectiveness of the residential treatment program in the future. Furthermore, such data might be more reliable and more complete. It certainly would be more easily obtainable and, therefore, less costly in both time and money.

APPENDIX I

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR BCJC PRODUCT EVALUATION

A. Demographic Data

1. Name: _____

2. Sex: a. Male ☐ b. Female ☐

3. Race: a. White ☐ b. Black ☐ c. Spanish/American ☐ d. Other ☐ _____ Specify

4. Date of birth: _____

5. Address (1973 - present): List most recent address first.

a. 1977: From _____ month/year to _____ month/year

(1) _____
Address: House #, street, county, city, state

(2) Residence: (a) Single-family dwelling ☐ Family owned ☐ Rented ☐

(b) Apartment ☐ Public housing ☐ Private housing ☐

b. 1976: From _____ month/year to _____ month/year

(1) _____
Address: House #, street, county, city, state

(2) Residence: (a) Single-family dwelling ☐ Family owned ☐ Rented ☐

(b) Apartment ☐ Public housing ☐ Private housing ☐

c. 1975: From _____ month/year to _____ month/year

(1) _____
Address: House #, street, county, city, state

(2) Residence: (a) Single-family dwelling ☐ Family owned ☐ Rented ☐

(b) Apartment ☐ Public housing ☐ Private housing ☐

d. 1974: From _____ month/year to _____ month/year

(1) _____
Address: House #, street, county, city, state

(2) Residence: (a) Single-family dwelling ☐ Family owned ☐ Rented ☐

(b) Apartment ☐ Public housing ☐ Private housing ☐

e. 1973: From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

(1) _____
Address: House #, street, county, city, state

(2) Residence: (a) Single-family dwelling ☐ Family owned ☐ Rented ☐

(b) Apartment ☐ Public housing ☐ Private housing ☐

6. a. Before remand: Marital status of parents: (1) Married ☐

Living together: Yes ☐ No ☐

(2) Unmarried ☐ Living together: Yes ☐ No ☐

(3) Legally separated ☐ (4) Divorced ☐ (5) Deceased: Father ☐ Mother ☐

b. Current: Marital status of parents (1) Married ☐

Living together: Yes ☐ No ☐

(2) Unmarried ☐ Living together: Yes ☐ No ☐

(3) Legally separated ☐ (4) Divorced ☐ (5) Deceased: Father ☐ Mother ☐

7. a. Before remand: Income status of parents: (1) Employed: Father ☐ Mother ☐

(2) Unemployed: Father ☐ Mother ☐ (3) Welfare: Father ☐ Mother ☐

(4) OASI: Father ☐ Mother ☐ Survivor's benefits ☐ Disability benefits ☐

(5) Unemployment Insurance: Father ☐ Mother ☐

b. Current: Income status of parents: (1) Employed: Father ☐ Mother ☐

(2) Unemployed: Father ☐ Mother ☐ (3) Welfare: Father ☐ Mother ☐

(4) OASI: Father ☐ Mother ☐ Survivor's benefits ☐ Disability benefits ☐

(5) Unemployment Insurance: Father ☐ Mother ☐

8. Family criminal record: a. Father: No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, answer the following: (1) Time span _____

(2) Type of offense(s) _____

(3) Incarcerated? Yes ☐ No ☐ (4) No. of times incarcerated? _____

(5) How long (average)? _____ (6) Where? JC ☐ TS ☐ Jail ☐ Prison ☐

b. Mother: No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, answer the following: (1) Time span _____

(2) Type of offense(s) _____

(3) Incarcerated? Yes ☐ No ☐ (4) No. of times incarcerated _____

(5) How long (average)? _____ (6) Where? JC ☐ TS ☐ Jail ☐ Prison ☐

c. Siblings: No ☐ Yes ☐ d. Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

If yes, answer for each: (1) Time span _____

(2) Type of offense(s) _____

(3) Incarcerated? Yes ☐ No ☐ (4) No. of times incarcerated _____

(5) How long (average)? _____ (6) Where? JC ☐ TS ☐ Jail ☐ Prison ☐

9. Social agencies in contact with the family:

a. Type(s) _____

b. Time span _____

c. Reason(s) for intervention _____

d. Don't know _____

10. Educational level completed by parents:

a. Father: Never attended school ☐ Grade School ☐ High School ☐

Community College ☐ College or University ☐

b. Mother: Never attended school ☐ Grade School ☐ High School ☐

Community College ☐ College or University ☐

B. <u>BCJC Residential Program Data</u>

1. Age at entry _____

2. Length of stay _____

3. Date released _____

4. Grade level: At entry _____ Upon release _____

5. Reading level: At entry _____ Upon release _____

6. Vocational training: a. Trade name _____

b. Status of skill development: (1) Marketable: Entry level ☐ Advanced ☐

(2) Non-marketable: (a) Further training recommended: Referred ☐

Not referred ☐ (b) Further training not recommended ☐

7. Attitudes and values clarification

a. Group meetings

(1) Group meetings have helped me care more about others. Yes ☐ No ☐

(2) Group meetings have helped me to enjoy going back to school. Yes ☐

No ☐

(3) Group meeting has helped me to be more responsible. Yes ☐ No ☐

b. Residential program

(1) PPC has increased my respect for others. Yes ☐ No ☐

(2) PPC has motivated me toward learning. Yes ☐ No ☐

(3) PPC has helped me to pursue a career. Yes ☐ No ☐

(4) PPC has helped me to stay out of trouble with the law. Yes ☐ No ☐

c. Residential school program

(1) The residential school program has helped me to go back to school

on a permanent basis. Yes ☐ No ☐

(2) I have learned more at the residential school program than I did

in the school I previously attended. Yes ☐ No ☐

8. Release status

a. Group home ☐ b. DSS ☐ c. Probation ☐ d. After care ☐

e. Release without Juvenile Center or Juvenile Court Supervision ☐

f. Other: _____
Specify

9. Drug use

a. Use of drugs before entering the residential program. Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, type of drugs used: (1) Marijuana ☐ (2) Hashish ☐

(3) Speed ☐ (4) Amphetamine ☐ (5) Heroin ☐ (6) Other: _____
Specify

b. Use of drugs after residential training. Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, type of drugs used: (1) Marijuana ☐ (2) Hashish ☐

(3) Speed ☐ (4) Amphetamine ☐ (5) Heroin ☐ (6) Other: _____
Specify

C. Arrest Record

1. Date _____

2. Charge _____

3. Type of offenses:

a. Property offenses (includes burglary, theft, auto theft, shoplifting, etc.): ☐ _____
Specify

b. Personal offenses (includes robbery, assult, fighting, rape, etc.):

☐ _____
Specify

c. Victimless offenses (includes procuring, pimping, prostitution, etc.):

☐ _____
Specify

d. Status offenses (non-delinquent behavior such as runaway, incarrigible, class disruption, etc.): ☐ _____
Specify

4. Disposition: a. Charges dropped ☐ b. Found not guilty ☐

c. Group Home ☐ d. Training school ☐ e. Probation ☐

f. Juvenile Court residential program ☐ g. Jail ☐ h. Prison ☐

i. Others ☐ _____
Specify

D. Educational Record (to date: List more recent school first.)

1. Schools attended:

a. Name _____ Highest grade completed _____

Address of school _____

From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

b. Name _____ Highest grade completed _____

Address of school _____

From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

c. Name _____ Highest grade completed _____

Address of school _____

From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

d. Name _____ Highest grade completed _____

Address of School _____

From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

2. Performance record for each school attended:

a. (1) Academic (reading level) _____

(2) Conduct: (a) Specified problems (behavioral) _____

(b) Teacher complaints (attitudes) _____

b. (1) Academic (reading level) _____

(2) Conduct: (a) Specified problems (behavioral) _____

(b) Teacher complaints (attitudes) _____

c. (1) Academic (reading level) _____

(2) Conduct: (a) Specified problems (behavioral) _____

(b) Teacher complaints (attitudes) _____

d. (1) Academic (reading level) _____

(2) Conduct: (a) Specified problems (behavioral) _____

(b) Teacher complaints (attitudes) _____

E. Employment Record (to date: List most recent employer first.)

1. a. Employer _____
Name Address

Dates: From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Job title: _____ _____
At entry Upon leaving or current

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

b. Performance record: Job requirements: Satisfactory ☐ Unsatisfactory ☐

Conduct: (1) Specified problems (behavior) _____

(1) Employer/Supervisor complaints (attitudes) _____

2. a. Employer _____
Name Address

Dates: From _____ to _____
month/year month/year

Job title: _____ _____
At entry Upon leaving or current

Reasons for change or leaving _____

_____

b. Performance record: Job requirements: Satisfactory ☐ Unsatisfactory ☐

Conduct: (1) Specified problems (behavior) _____

(2) Employer/Supervisor complaints (attitudes) _____

F. Community Activities

1. Before remand:

Memberships: Church ☐ Choir ☐ Usher board ☐ Youth Club ☐

Athletic team ☐ Other: _____
Specify

YMCA ☐ YWCA ☐ Community Center ☐ P.A.L. ☐ Boy Scouts ☐

Girl Scouts ☐ Other: _____
Specify

2. Current:

Memberships: Church ☐ Choir ☐ Usher board ☐ Youth Club ☐

Athletic team ☐ Other: _____
Specify

YMCA ☐ YWCA ☐ Community Center ☐ P.A.L. ☐ Boy Scouts ☐

Girl Scouts ☐ Other: _____
Specify

G. Personal Hobbies (Leisure time activities)

1. Before remand:

a. Sports ☐

b. Television ☐

c. Physical culture: Weight-lifting ☐ Karate ☐ Judo ☐ Other: _____ Specify

d. Model-building (cars, airplanes, boats, etc.) ☐

e. Stamp collecting ☐

f. Other: _____

2. Current:

a. Sports ☐

b. Television ☐

c. Physical culture: Weight-lifting ☐ Karate ☐ Judo ☐ Other: _____ Specify

d. Model-building (cars, airplanes, boats, etc.) ☐

e. Stamp collecting ☐

f. Other: _____

APPENDIX II

Andrews University Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104 (616) 471-7771

October 17, 1977

Dear

We need your help!

We have been asked to evaluate the residential treatment program of the Berrien County Juvenile Center. We understand that you have been there. Thus, you can help us to do a good job.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire. It will give us the information we need to determine the effects and benefits of the Juvenile Center program. All of the information requested will be helpful to us. We know you will do the best job you can. If you need any help with it, we suggest that you enlist the help of someone you trust, someone who understands and who will protect your interests.

Everything you tell us is strictly confidential. In the final analysis, the results will be presented in such a way that you and your family will not be identified.

Thanks for your help. Complete the questionnaire as soon as possible--as a matter of fact, why not sit down and do it now? Then, put it in the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope and drop it in the mail.

In answering the questions you may have to use check "√" marks in the box provided, or in some cases fill in the blank on lines provided.

We appreciate your cooperation very much.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Bernard M. Lall
Professor of
Educational Administration

cz

Enclosure

APPENDIX III

Impressions from Interviews

The process of interviewing the young people for this study usually began with a phone call to their homes. More often than not they were not in and calls had to be repeatedly made to ascertain whether they were home or not. Even after speaking to them and setting up an appointment one was never sure that they would keep it.

A case in point was a young man in Niles who assured me that he would be home for about an hour after I called. By the time I had arrived a few minutes later he had left for what seemed to be a long evening out. On my second visit I did find him and he was particularly helpful, not only in supplying information about himself but in helping me trace the whereabouts of a young lady who lived several miles from his home and without whose help I would never have been able to contact.

This young man, as were so many other young people, seemed to be very much on his own although he lived with a parent of relatives. On occasion a parent would remark on the phone that she (most regularly) had not seen her son all day and that he normally gets home late at night. Such youngsters were difficult to contact and I learned very quickly that it was futile to leave a number asking them to call. They simply never did.

Inadequate parental control was one of the many problems these young people faced. It seemed to be always more acute where the mother

had remarried or whenever there was a one-parent family. A mother stated that she was relieved after her son had left her home because, as she confided, he was a source of terror to her. He had broken her windows, carted away her valuables and had hidden stolen goods in her backyard.

As I surveyed an impeccably kept house I wondered out loud about the actions of that teenager. Being unsatisfied with his mother's answers to my questions, I decided to find the young man myself. I was soon at a deadend, however, because she said that she had no clues as to his whereabouts. I rechecked at the Center, obtained his latest reported employer's address, and anxiously placed the call. As the records were checked I kept hoping for good luck. The momentary hope soon vanished as the secretary's voice came on again, "He left here three months ago, we have no forwarding address, sorry." I too was sorry. I asked a few of the young people I interviewed about him, but no one seemed to know. I remained with my conjectures and questions, for I never met him.

But those I met shared a lot with me at times, more than I needed to know. In fact, there were occasions when I had to hurry my questions because of the thickening darkness or because there was an appointment or St. Joseph looked too deserted. The majority of the youngsters were very verbal. There was always something they liked or particularly disliked about the program or something they wanted to share about their past. None wanted to repeat those experiences however. In fact, they all were sure they did not want to be placed in an institution again. One, justifiably or not, felt a great distaste for the law, particularly policemen. "They are out to get you," he scowled. "Every time I see them I curse them."

This was not an opinion, however, shared by the young men at the county jail. The law had caught up with them simply because they had

violated it and invariably, the violation had occurred under the influence of their associates. One youth, who after he was released from the Center felt certain that he was going to go "straight", soon found out that it was not all that easy once he was in the community again. In a few months he was caught breaking and entering, with his peers playing a major part in the act. Another teenager who was challenged to steal a tractor from a farm proved to his friends that he was no "chicken." That light-headed moment caused him several months in jail.

Out of the group visited at the jail there was one young man who felt that he had been jailed because of incorrect police information or simply because it was known that he had been to the Center. Because of this, he believed that his testimony was not accepted at court. He felt he was not trusted. Perhaps, more pathetically ironic was the case of the young man who was never accepted in his community after his release. Parents advised their children about being seen with him, he was kicked out of school without a hearing on a smoking charge--which he claimed he never committed, and his parents never seemed to have time for him. He said that he grew tired of hearing, "Not now . . ." "What about this afternoon or tomorrow, don't you see I am busy?" Slowly he drifted from home. He spoke to no one because no one cared. He left home and later was placed in jail to await a hearing on some charges.

"You know something," he stated as he was about to be taken to his cell, "you are the first person I have told these things to. I don't know why I did, I guess I just had to. I may be placed in prison, but I will do some studying there. When I get out I want to help young people escape what I went through."

No doubt there are many youngsters who are earnest and sincere about wanting to change their lifestyles. Many who are not behind bars

have found jobs and are at the same time working on their high school diplomas. One 17-year-old told me, "I don't want to get into any more trouble. I am staying off the streets and I am trying to make new friends because I did a lot of things just because my friends were doing them." His sincerity was obvious. There were others who were not so sure of what they wanted or where they were going. "I may never get a high school diploma, because I have no one to take care of my baby," a teenage mother remarked. "I can't leave her and go to school." Sitting in her sparsely furnished apartment I asked her if she could truly take care of her baby. "I think so," she replied, "at least I am trying."

Others are trying also, even if it is for different reasons but are doing so against great odds. For many the biggest problem is completing their education because the high schools will not readmit them. Rebuffed by school officials, they resign themselves to the hollow feeling that they will never earn a high school diploma. So they drift along, without education, without employment and seemingly without hope. Is there a way out? Will society help now, or will it wait until brass keys have turned huge locks in iron doors and these young people have been sentenced to prison? The answer is obvious, but one that demands immediate action.

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